

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

PROTECTING LIFE

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing on Earth more precious than life. No matter where you stand on the abortion issue, most Americans find the practice and actions of Dr. Kermit Gosnell, an abortion provider, to be brutal, unconscionable, and barbaric.

The astounding reality is that Dr. Gosnell's methods of killing babies who survive abortions are commonly used by clinics across the Nation. Similar deadly actions take the lives of 1 million unborn children each year in the United States. This is a violent act that is entirely unjustifiable.

I am a firm believer that every human being is created in God's own image, every life is precious, and we have an obligation to protect life at every stage. It's time we get rid of this gruesome procedure once and for all, and I hope and pray that the President will consider it before more innocent lives are taken.

HONORING THE MEMORY AND MOURNING THE LOSS OF RONNIE RASPBERRY OF HOUSTON, TEXAS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the greatest labor leaders that I have known and to honor the memory and mourn the loss of Ronnie Raspberry of Houston, Texas. I rise to pay tribute to him as a champion of working people, one of the great community leaders in the cities of Houston and Harris in Texas.

Unfortunately, he passed. In this month of April, we lost a dear friend. Ronnie Raspberry was born in 1941 in the midst of the times of challenge. And he married his beloved wife, Roycie, and they are proud parents of five children.

Being born in the midst of World War II, he understood as a child the value of service, and so he joined the United States Marine Corps and was honorably discharged.

He then began to work in an apprenticeship program under the Houston Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee for the Electrical Industry. He then became a member of Local Union No. 716 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers,

where I first met him. What a generous heart; what a man who loved people. He loved to train people. He was a fighter to ensure that there was dignity in the workplace.

In 1974, at age 32, he was elected as business manager. He held that position for 15 years. During his stewardship, he served as its chief contract negotiator, chairman, and secretary of numerous boards and trusts and committees. He continued to represent labor at labor conferences. He was elected and served 5 years as a representative of the Sixth District International Executive Council.

Ronnie was awarded the West Gulf Ports Council "Labor Leader of the Year," Mr. Speaker, and appointed to many other positions by Governor White. We knew he was a good leader.

So I stand here today to offer my deepest sympathy to his wife and family and to thank him for his service as he rests in peace. We love you. We thank you for being the great leader that you've been to all those who are in need, fighting for the working people. Thank you, Ronnie. God bless you. And, again, may you rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Ronnie Raspberry, a great American, a champion of working people, and one of the great community leaders in the City of Houston. Ronnie Raspberry died this past Monday, April 8, 2013, at the age of 71. His loss is mourned not only by his family and friends but the thousands of people he helped and inspired over the course of his full and eventful life.

Born on August 14, 1941, Ronnie Raspberry later met and married his beloved wife, Roycie, and they were the proud parents of five children.

After serving and receiving an Honorable Discharge from the United States Marine Corps, Ronnie applied for and was accepted into a 4-year Apprenticeship Program under the Houston Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee for the Electrical Industry.

After completing his first of apprenticeship training, Ronnie became a member of Local Union #716 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Ronnie served on every committee his local union, IBEW Local #716, would allow.

Ronnie completed his apprenticeship, graduating with honor. He then ran for and was elected to a number of Board positions in his Local Union.

In 1974, at the age of 32, he was elected as Business Manager of IBEW Local Union #716. He held this position for 15 years.

During Ronnie's stewardship of Local Union No. 716, he served as its Chief Contract Negotiator, and as both Chairman and/or Secretary of numerous Boards, Trusts, and Committees, as well as all other responsibilities that go with being Business Manager. He continued to represent labor at Labor Conferences and Conventions, as well as Political Conferences and Conventions.

Ronnie was elected and served 5 years as representative to the Sixth District International Executive Council of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers representing the IBEW members from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Arizona.

In 1986, Ronnie was awarded the West Gulf Ports Council "Labor Leader of the Year"

Award. Ronnie also appointed by then Governor Mark White, to serve on the Management Task Force for the Texas State Treasurer, Ann Richards. He later was appointed by Governor Ann Richards as a Commissioner on the Texas State Licensing and Regulation Commission, a position he held for six years.

Ronnie served as the Executive Secretary of the Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council until December 2012 when he finished his term. He then joined the high respected law firm of Williams Bailey, now Williams Kherkher, of Houston, Texas, serving as Labor Relations Officer, a position he held until he passed away earlier this week.

Mr. Speaker, Ronnie Raspberry lived a full and consequential life and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him as a friend, colleague, advocate, and community leader. Most of all he will be missed by his relatives and his children who knew and loved him as Dad; his loving wife, Roycie.

Mr. Speaker, I ask a moment of silence in honor of the memory of Ronnie Raspberry.

□ 1420

THE RECOVERING SERVICE MEMBERS DISABILITY BENEFITS ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague, Representative LOEBSACK, and I are proud to reintroduce the Recovering Service Members Disability Benefits Act. This legislation is commonsense and fixes a glaring problem.

Currently, our Nation's wounded warriors are forced to wait 5 months for their approved Social Security disability benefits. This is injustice to our Nation's heroes. These are benefits that they have earned at a very high price, and they deserve better.

The Recovering Service Members Disability Benefits Act will remove this mandatory 5-month waiting period, allowing the wounded warriors to collect the benefits for which they have been already approved. To be clear, this bill does not approve benefit requests or add new individuals into the system. The bill simply expedites earned and approved benefits to eligible wounded warriors.

It is an honor to introduce this legislation and correct this issue. Our disabled servicemembers deserve the immediate reassurance of knowing there is financial support as they cope with the emotional and physical challenges of recovery.

Together, we hope this bipartisan legislation will be brought through committee and to the House floor in a swift manner.

Thank you, and God bless all those who serve our country.

CLIMATE CHANGE

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with my colleagues from the Safe Climate Caucus to call on Republicans to end their silence and join the conversation on climate disruption.

A recent United Nations report provides a stark warning, saying that if we don't address climate disruption, the number of people living in extreme poverty could increase by up to 3 billion by 2050.

The report is clear: failing to act now creates a much larger and more costly problem later. Fortunately, we have the ability and the means to address climate disruption.

I'm proud to say that clean-energy companies and universities in my own district are leading the way in research, clean-job creation, and sustainable long-term solutions.

But this type of innovation and job creation cannot go on if Republicans continue to ignore the threat of climate change and recklessly cut funding to important programs that protect the air we breathe and the water we drink.

I urge my Republican colleagues to think about their moral responsibility to join this dialogue and to protect our planet for their children and for the long-term stability of this country.

THE BUDGET

(Mr. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the President on finally sending up a budget, though it was 65 days late with no real explanation for why it was late.

Of course, the House passed its budget on time. The Senate, to their credit, for the first time in 4 years passed a budget on time. And the amazing thing, Mr. Speaker, is that in the face of an almost \$1 trillion deficit and a \$17 trillion debt, the President sent up a budget that increases spending, increases taxes, increases the deficit, cuts Social Security and Medicare, and still never balances. That's quite a feat.

Mr. Speaker, America knows our debt and our deficit are strangling our economy. Let's roll up our sleeves, work with the Senate, and solve the fiscal mess this Nation is in.

GUN SAFETY

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the clear bipartisan support in the Senate for a full and fair debate on meaningful ways to reduce gun violence in our country.

Having experienced a gun accident myself that left me paralyzed more than 30 years ago, I know firsthand

that the answer to keeping people, especially our children, safe is not having more guns around our kids and our communities as the gun lobby has proposed.

I am hopeful that the Senate has heard the public outcry for real change with 90 percent of Americans favoring the basic step of universal background checks.

Forty percent of the gun sales in America occur at gun shows that require no background check at all. Let's close the gun show loophole and ensure that whenever a gun is bought or sold in this country, that there's a background check so we keep the guns out of the hands of criminals or those who have mental illness that is so severe that they would be a danger to themselves or their community.

As the Senate moves forward, I continue to urge Speaker BOEHNER to stop delaying full debate on the House floor on responsible gun safety legislation. The House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force has put forward a comprehensive set of proposals, and I welcome ideas from both parties.

What is inexcusable in the wake of so many gun tragedies is inaction. We cannot sit back and wait any longer.

THE BUDGET

(Mr. WOODALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor today fresh from a Budget Committee hearing. We had the OMB Director presenting the President's budget today.

I know so many folks have said, I thought the budget was required by law to be here the first week of February. That's true. Better late than never continues to be true, as well. But as we listened to the details of the budget, Mr. Speaker, what we heard was that the President is proposing to increase spending, increase taxes, and increase the debt.

Mr. Speaker, there are thousands of pages to this budget. I hope we'll find some things that we can agree on. But I know that the American people agree with Republicans in this House when we say taxes are already too high, spending is already too high, and the debt is already too high.

The President's budget never, ever pays one penny of our Federal debt. It's wrong. We can do better. This House must come together and lead that charge.

REGARDING NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF PHILADELPHIA MURDER TRIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PITTENGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, will the decades-long national news media cover-up of the brutality and the violence of abortion methods ever end?

Will Americans ever be told of the horrifying details as to how and how often abortionists dismember, decapitate, and chemically poison innocent babies?

Will Americans ever be informed by a conscientious, unbiased national news media that in the past 40 years over 55 million child victims have been brutally killed by abortion, a staggering loss of children's lives that equates to the entire population of England, and that many women have been hurt physically, emotionally, and psychologically? And according to the Center for Disease Control—and this is a very conservative estimate from CDC—over 400 women have actually died from legal abortions.

Will Americans ever be told that of the 55 million children, Planned Parenthood alone claims responsibility for destroying 6 million babies and that just 2 weeks ago a Planned Parenthood leader in Florida testified at a legislative hearing at a State initiative to protect born-alive infants that even when a child survives an abortion, the decision to assist or kill the born-alive infant should be “up to the woman, her family and her physician”? In other words, if a child intended to be aborted survives the assault, the choice to kill remains—so-called “after-birth abortion.”

□ 1430

Isn't that extreme child abuse?

Murdering newborns in the abortion clinic, it seems to me, is indistinguishable from any other child predator wielding a knife or a gun. Why isn't the child also seen as a patient in need of medical care, warmth, nutrition, and—dare I say—love?

Now another national media cover-up—in this case, even when a Jeffrey Dahmer-like murder trial of an abortionist named Kermit Gosnell, who ran the benign-sounding Women's Medical Society unfolds in a Philadelphia courtroom, replete with shocking testimony of beheadings, unfathomable abuse, death, and body parts in jars. To this day, the national news media remains uninterested, woefully indifferent—AWOL.

Why the censorship? Why does Gosnell's house of horrors—his trial—fail to this day to attract any serious and meaningful national news reporting?

Dr. Kermit Gosnell is on trial for eight counts of murder. One count is for the death of a woman, a victim who